

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING STANLEY KOSTA

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 19, 2012

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise Stanley Kosta, a veteran of World War II who was recently honored by the Republic of France with its highest military decoration, the French Legion of Honor. He was named "Chevalier", or Knight, in the National Order of the Legion of Honor and presented with the medal at the French Consulate in San Francisco on January 23, 2012.

The Republic of France is awarding this prestigious honor to United States veterans who helped in the liberation of France in WWII during one of four major campaigns: Normandy, Southern France, Northern France, and the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge).

Born on May 5, 1917 in San Francisco, California, Mr. Kosta was 26 years old when he was drafted into the United States Army in July 1943. Serving in the 9th Infantry Division, 47th Infantry Regiment, he landed in Normandy in July 1944 about a month after D-Day. For the next nine months he advanced through France, Belgium, and Germany serving as a radio operator on and near the front lines.

He fought courageously in the battle of Saint-Lo and to strategic victory in another key-town in Normandy, Falaise. From there his division crossed the Marne River, just east of Paris for the Ardennes Counteroffensive, also known as the Battle of the Bulge, which was one of the largest and bloodiest of WWII. On January 30, 1944, his unit crossed the Rhine River to enter Germany. Shortly thereafter, he became ill during combat and was sent to a hospital in England.

After the war, Mr. Kosta settled in the West End neighborhood of San Rafael, California. After 35 years of marriage his first wife passed away. Eventually, he found happiness again and remarried. He has two amazing sons, one a former police captain from San Rafael, and the other an artist in Denmark.

Few people discover a lifelong passion at an early age and find time to enjoy it daily, but Stanley was introduced to the accordion by the age of 9 and to this day he plays regularly. Unable to read sheet music, he can still play over 300 songs.

From a young age, he always knew he wanted a job doing physical labor. He was not one cut out for an office. Growing up during the Great Depression, he dropped out of high school during the 11th grade to find a job. He took several odds jobs including selling papers, passing out theater fliers, and constructing mannequins. After the war, he worked for several breweries in San Francisco, California, including Acme, Burgermeister, and Rainier.

In 2004, sixty years after the liberation of France, the Republic of France started recognizing the service of United States Veterans of

WWII for their part in the liberation. Mr. Kosta is joined by several other WWII veterans from Marin and Sonoma Counties who have received the French Legion of Honor and they are: Mr. Reginald Alexander of Kenwood, CA (deceased); Mr. Marion Grohoski of Santa Rosa, CA; Mr. Earl Shanken of San Rafael, CA; Mr. John Thomson of Santa Rosa (recently deceased); and Mr. Gerard Cormier of Corte Madera. Many veterans have applications pending, but even more did not live to see this day.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and awe that I extend my gratitude to Mr. Kosta and his comrades for their service to the United States of America during WWII.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 19, 2012

Ms. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National History Day, a year-long academic program in the humanities focused on historical research for 6th to 12th grade students. On Monday, February 13, 2012, President Obama awarded National History Day with the prestigious 2011 National Humanities Medal. The White House recognized this program as one that "inspires in American students a passion for history," and today it is our privilege to echo this commendation.

In doing so, we congratulate Dr. Cathy Gorn, Executive Director of National History Day, the entire National History Day Staff, its board, and its honorary advisory council on their distinguished service. It is quite uncommon for a program—rather than an individual—to win this prominent medal, and it is clear this program is deserving of our acknowledgement.

The National History Day program invites students to conduct primary historical research in libraries, archives, museums, and historic sites. Their analysis ultimately results in original conclusions that culminate in papers, websites, exhibits, performances, and documentaries. These products are then entered into local, state, and national competitions.

Each year, more than half a million elementary and secondary school students participate in this not-for-profit program. The organization operates in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, as well as U.S. territories and is currently in the process of expanding internationally.

Students walk away from National History Day with a wealth of information as well as invaluable research, problem solving, and critical thinking skills. The program has been called "one of the nation's most successful educational efforts in the humanities." In fact, studies have shown that the college and career-ready skills that students acquire through participation in National History Day have resulted in substantially improved performance

on standardized tests across all subjects, including science and math.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize National History Day and to associate myself with its noble cause. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this tremendous program in order to demonstrate our gratitude and to encourage the continuation of its good works.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES MADE BY NANCY DEMBOWSKI

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 19, 2012

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of a distinguished State Representative, former Mayor and outstanding citizen, Nancy Dembowski of Knox, Indiana. Ms. Dembowski used her background in radio broadcasting to launch a career in public service that has been notable for her ability to communicate with her constituents and understand their concerns. State Representative Dembowski's dedication to community service and her life as the spouse of a steelworker have made her an effective spokesperson for the interests of average working Hoosiers.

Ms. Dembowski began her public life in 1984 as a member of the Starke County Council where her tireless efforts earned her the Starke County Citizen of the Year Award in 1990. After two terms on the Council, she served three terms as mayor of Knox during which her plans for economic development brought 1100 jobs to the area. Also during her service as Mayor, the City of Knox received two Achievement Awards from the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, a tribute to her efforts to build the Knox Community Center and renovate the historic Gateway Depot.

Ms. Dembowski served as a Senator in the Indiana State Senate from 2002 to 2004 and then moved to the State House in 2006 where she served as the Majority Caucus Chair. While serving in state government, she has championed local education, economic development, pro-life issues and the fight against domestic and child abuses.

As if holding public office was not contribution enough, Ms. Dembowski is also an active member of the Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis Club, and Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. She has been the President of the Starke County Junior Achievement Board, Secretary of the Starke County Youth Club, Chair of Starke United and a member of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees. She is a former member of the Starke County Coalition Against Domestic Abuse, where she helped inaugurate a plan to build the Phoenix House, a safe haven for families escaping abuse.

Despite her many professional successes, Ms. Dembowski values most her 43 years of

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